554 198 [792] you for your cloak, you would have immediately given it to him. God was pleased with them at that time."

This notion of changing foci of authority and power cannot be divorced from the related political phenomena of the tendency toward legitimacy and the role institutionalization 128 process. In the next chapter, I will attempt to show how such a conceptual framework can be utilized in an analysis of culture and political change.

Modern Legal Roles

634 554 [648] [199] The roles of 'umda and shaikh were created and imposed upon the Bedouins by Muhammad 'Ali sometime during the early part of the nineteenth century in order to facilitate administration, maintain security in the desert, and protect the Western frontier.

[619] Both of these roles are representative offices at the primary level of the tribal structure. The 'Aishaibat have an 'umda and a shaikh who reside in Marsa Matruh and work in close relation with the Governor. In terms of a chain of command, these offices receive demands which may originate either with the Governor in Matruh or with Bedouins in al-Qasr. But these offices are subservient to both the Governor and the Bedouins since no decision-making powers of any consequence resides with them. With reference to the two authority [571] [635] structures, the Egyptian and the Bedouin, the 'umda and the

634 554 [571] [635] shaikh are administrators, not executives, in the service of the Governor and the "status group" of al-Qasr. Nevertheless, under the influence of the bureaucratic principle, as a new structural principle in Bedouin society, these offices could conceivably become seats of power.[4]

634 554 666 571 The 'umda and shaikh are described as "elective" offices by the Bedouins but, in fact, they are appointive just like the office of 'aqila. Theoretically, every man has a vote but, actually, only the members of the "status group" vote. Paradoxically, perhaps, the Bedouins stress two major qualifications for these offices: the 'umda and the shaikh must be men "who know the needs of the Bedouin of the desert, and know how to talk to the Governor"; and, "they must be men who do nothing without the permission of the 'awaaqil (i.e. without the permission of the "status group" who elected the 'aqila in the first place).

634 554 The two offices are not equal in prestige and status neither in the eyes of the Bedouins or of the Egyptians. The office of shaikh is the lesser office. It amounts to a clerical post, and the shaikh really functions as an assistant

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[635] [4] The Governor, who is of Bedouin origin, has already recognized this potential and has moved to eliminate the possibility of a more powerful 'umda representing a more powerful status group." When I left the field, the Governor was in the process of drawing up new ground rules for electing the 'umda and the shaikh which would call for public elections on a "one man, one vote" basis.

634 554 to the 'umda. Both offices are for a life-term, only being terminated by bad behavior or senility. At the expiration 634 571 of an incumbent's term, the "status group" meets in al-Qasr to decide upon his replacement. The name of a "nominee" •635 666 is passed on to the Governor who is expected to approve the Bedouins' selection of a representative to the government. [178] [177] It is this "status group"-controlled process which the Governor seeks to change. Since these are officially held offices in the U.A.R. governmental structure, he feels that elections to fill their vacancies should be a public affair. Naturally, he will exercise more influence over the naming of candidates in this way, and the Bedouins perceive this as a challenge to the traditional structure of leadership and control of external relations.

634 *613 666 [428] The offices of 'umda and shaikh are even more hereditary than that of 'aqila, which theoretically should not be the case. By definition, the role of 'aqila is functional at the bait level, and so the recruitment pool of candidates for this office is inherently limited. By comparison, the offices of 'umda and shaikh should go to the "best men" in the tribe, and, therefore, the recruitment pool should be 634 *613 666 428 [571] tribal-wide. But, in fact, these two offices are considered "the property" of the wealthiest lineages in the al-Qasr area. There is a traditional rationale behind this fact: there is the structural necessity for, and conscious practice of, an

*613 582 all of the marriages in the history of 'Ailit Ma'fas (see Table 1).[1A] From a total of 197 marriages, 33 were within the 'Aishaibat tribe. Of these 33 marriages with the other lineages of al-Qasr (see Figure 3 for the lineages of al-Qasr), 2 were with 'Ailit Abu Qarasa, and 2 with 'Ailit Zallat, 4 each were with 'Ailit Zagharat, 'Ailit Dawlat, and 'Ailit Shraif, but 17, or just over 50 per cent, were with 'Ailit Lazumi.

634 554 For the time being, the offices of 'umda and shaikh seem to be modern symbols of the traditional power structure rather than loci of real power, though this does not preclude their becoming so in the future. But for the present, these roles are considered "not of the people, not of the desert, they belong to the government." Here is the way one 'aqila explained it:

634 554 *613

> The 'umda is higher in the government but the 'aqila is the responsible one in the 'aiela. The shaikh has nothing to do with 'awaqil, he only makes contact between them and the government . . . The 'umda gets the request from the government and asks the 'awaqil to handle the situation, but he does not tell them how to do it . . . The 'umda and shaikh go to meetings with the Governor, then they tell the 'awaqil about the matters discussed. There is no direct contact between the Governor and the 'awaqil . . . The 'umda comes to the 'awaqil concerning general problems . . . If the Arabs need something from the government, they go to the 'umda. They tell him to go and tell the Governor what they want . . . The 'umda represents them and he does good in this. God only knows if he is doing a good job. If he is not it will show in the next election.

634 •635 *613 554

634 554 From the standpoint of the political system of al-Qasr, we might conclude that the 'umda and shaikh are roles

[1A] [This should read Table 5. See p.115--Analyst]

634 of little significance in the authority structure. Very few
554 people of the al-Qasr area have had any contact with these
officers, and very few want any contact. On the other hand,
634 the direction of change in al-Qasr and the bureaucratic growth
554 of the government in the Western Desert makes it likely that
178 all Bedouins will be drawn into the total authority structure,
and that the roles of 'umda and shaikh will expand. These
roles will not increase in terms of traditional prestige and
status, but they may gain the authority which they do not possess
now. This is in view of the fact that the traditional authority
structure remains relatively intact. The 'umda and the
shaikh have no traditional basis of authority, so they cannot
make decisions which are morally binding for Bedouins of al-
Qasr at this time. It is obvious, of course, that the 'umda
634 may refer to the Governor, and even the use of governmental
635 force, as the basis of his legitimacy. But this has never
554 happened. The incumbent 'umda is still a Bedouin, and this
178 prevents him from challenging the traditional ways. Also,
the Governor is concerned with restricting the 'umda's
influence not increasing it.

634 I do not mean to imply that there is, or will be, a
613 struggle for power between traditional authority represented
178 by the 'aqila and modern legal authority represented by the
578 'umda. Such a struggle could not actually occur since when,
and if, the 'umda came to represent authority in a newly

He was sometimes asked to sit-in as a witness for important contractual matters. Note that in the rawaabit al-'awaaqil of Bait Shafaila of 'Ailit Lazumi (presented in Chapter Four), Hajj 'Ali who is neither from 'Ailit Lazumi nor an 'aqila was present to sign and validate this document.

Hajj 'Ali, then, operates in the micropolitical system and the traditional authority structure of al-Qasr. But what is just as important, he has secured a firm foothold in the modern bureaucratic structure of the near-by town. He straddles both camps. The Governor of Marsa Matruh was an important aid to my understanding of Hajj 'Ali's role as "broker." The Governor claimed that the British first introduced the roles of 'umda and shaikh; they did this to "control the Bedouin" and to "get the men out of the tents." He explained in his own way what he considered to be the structural differentiation of political roles in al-Qasr.

> Let me tell you, these fellows are very clever. They have an 'umda . . . he comes to my office and says: "I want this and this." I say, "No." Then he goes back to the 'awaqil and tells them that, and then these fellows begin to think in what way they can get what they want. But the 'umda is nothing; it is the 'aqila whom the Bedouins listen to and love . . . The 'umda is elected (at this time) by the Bedouins. They put forward a man who hesitates, one who can say yes or no . . . But there is a real leader for the people, this is a man such as Hajj 'Ali, here is a man the Bedouins love.

The Governor said that Hajj 'Ali speaks well and thinks well. Twice in the interview the Governor said that

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•635 Hajj 'Ali "became an 'aqila by his way of life." Of course,
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159 the fact is that Hajj 'Ali is not an 'aqila at all. Although
554 I feel that the Governor should understand the Bedouin authority
*[613] structure, he is not alone in his misconceptions. The chief
agricultural engineer for the G.D.D.O., who works very closely
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159 with the Bedouins of al-Qasr, also thought that Hajj 'Ali
554 was the 'aqila of Bait 'Umar in 'Ailit Ma'fas. Furthermore,
*613 and most impressive of all, one 'aqila in 'Ailit Dawlat and
his four sons all thought that Hajj 'Ali was the 'aqila of
Bait 'Umar. There is more here than just ignorance of
Bedouin society on the part of officials, and disinterest
on the part of the Dawlat 'aqila. There is good reason for
these different parties to mistake Hajj 'Ali as a key
traditional "authority," or spokesman for his corporate group.
It seems clear that in their respective dealings they must
have encountered Hajj 'Ali in some kind of representative
capacity. The 'aqila who insisted that Hajj 'Ali was an
'aqila, even after I pointed out that he was not, lived
outside the 'izba sector and hence mistook an important
rajal khair for an 'aqila. The Governor understandably
mistook the most influential man in al-Qasr as an 'aqila.

635 There are other traits which qualify Hajj 'Ali as
648 the singular leader of the Bedouins. A few years back, the
[554] Governor of Marsa Matruh formed a Governor's Council
[156] (Majlis al-Muhafza) made up of representatives of the Bedouin
[159]

•635 [648] population of the whole Western Desert, and representatives of the Egyptian government employees working in the province. [634] The Bedouin representatives appointed to this council need not be an 'umda or a shaikh, although they may be. The oldest Bedouin member of the council, who happens to be an 'umda, told me that "the Governor picks the men who he feels understand the problems of the people."

635 124 *613 The Governor himself thinks that every Bedouin on his council is an 'aqila. He replied to my question about the criteria for membership on the Majlis al-Muhafza: "I am using a new selection system. Rather than choose the 'umda or shaikh, I choose the 'aqila. Every man on the council is an 'aqila, and the number is determined by the population of the area . . . But I appoint more men from the [619] 'Ali Ahmar (see Figures 3 and 7)[1] than from other tribes. This is because they are more numerous, and they are near Matruh where I am able to contact them immediately. The 'Ali Ahmar are represented by six men and the other tribes by just three men."

156 159 554 635 648 [114] Hajj 'Ali is one of these six men and the only member of the Council who resides in al-Qasr. I attended and observed the December meeting of the Council. The Governor sat at the head of a long table with the Egyptian representatives on either side of him. At the other end of the table sat the Bedouin representatives, Hajj 'Ali among them. Purely

1. [See pp. 65 & 77 respectively--Analyst]

156 administrative business took up most of the time at the
159 meeting, and only the Governor and the Egyptians took part
554 in the discussion. At the conclusion of the meeting, the
635 Governor asked if any present had comments to make. Hajj
648 'Ali rose, and delivered a formal and well-prepared speech
[871] on the inadequacies of the educational facilities in Matruh.
[537] He noted that the Governor had promised the Bedouins that if they sent their sons in from the desert for secondary schooling, their material needs would be taken care of, but that in fact the Governor had not kept his promise for there was not enough space and beds for the boys. The Governor apologized for this condition and said he was trying to correct it. I noted that a few Egyptians found something amusing about this incident, but that all of the Bedouins present were serious and nodded in agreement with the points made by Hajj 'Ali.

156 We should note that Hajj 'Ali was the only Bedouin to
159 speak up at the meeting, that he spoke in the formal, tradi-
554 tional manner, and that he showed concern for the real problems
635 of the Bedouins. Hajj 'Ali is careful to protect his identity as a Bedouin, and in this he differs from the 'umda and most of the "status group."

121 In situations of induced change, the cultural problems
156 involved differ in their conception and immediacy as defined
159 by the agents and the recipients of change. Hajj 'Ali, who
554 is both an agent and a recipient of change, is intimate with
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121 156 159 554 635 177 the problems of the Bedouins of al-Qasr. He knows how to phrase them, and his place on the Majlis al-Muhafza gives him the right and the opportunity to air them. This is the role of the "cultural broker." Before the meeting of the council, Hajj 'Ali had gathered a group of the men from al-Qasr and they had talked about which demands should be presented to the Governor. This is purely a political process which Hajj 'Ali manipulates. The formulation and presentation [648] of demands became, in the hands of Hajj 'Ali, "inputs" into the Egyptian political system with the hope that they will materialize as "outputs" and the satisfaction of needs - to use the terminology of David Easton's "systems analysis" (1965b).

156 159 554 635 177 On another occasion, Hajj 'Ali demonstrated his status and political leadership and the fact that he has assumed the position of spokesman for the Bedouin of al-Qasr during this period of change. Once each year the Governor makes a tour of al-Qasr to inspect the school, the cooperative building, the government experimental farm, and the area in general. After the inspection tour, he holds a reception in a ceremonial tent set up for the occasion. At this time, he states his evaluations and opinions, distributes some clothing material to the poorer families of the area, and asks for suggestions from the Bedouins who sit on the ground before the tent. The only suggestion forthcoming from the Bedouins was

156 by the secretary of the cooperative society who requested
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554 that the government furnish bus service between Matruh and
635 al-Qasr. The Governor thought this a good idea and said he
177 would inquire into the matter.

156 As the Governor suggested that the meeting be adjourned,
159 Hajj 'Ali stood up, faced the Governor and began another of
554 his formal speeches in the rich tradition of Arabic; it was
635 the best Arabic I had heard spoken in the desert. This speech
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537 was for the benefit of all present, Bedouins and officials alike. Hajj 'Ali made no requests but simply thanked the Governor for honoring al-Qasr with his presence. In this short well-prepared tribute, he said:

> We feel the efforts of the government and we can scarcely imagine or dream of this development. For instance, we were living in tents and now only five per cent remain in tents while the remainder are in houses. We were dressed simply, but now we are dressed in poplin material. Those who could afford one set of clothes now can afford two. Thanks be to God, all this is due to Jamal Abd al-Nasser.

156 It is significant, of course, that smiles once again
159 played on the faces of the Governor's entourage and nothing
554 but admiration on the faces of the Bedouins. As Hajj 'Ali
635 spoke he did not face the Governor directly but turned aside,
537 speaking both to him and the Bedouins--Hajj 'Ali, the Bedouin,
had been sitting on the ground before the Governor. The
[634] 'umda and shaikh had accompanied the Governor on his tour

156 159 554 635 537 634 122 522 and they sat on chairs inside the tent. I returned to Marsa Matruh in the 'umda's car (1964 Ford, highly polished) with the 'umda and the shaikh. They openly joked about Hajj 'Ali and his manner of presentation; they repeated some of his "stilted" phrases and laughed. Hajj 'Ali gave last year's reception speech also. This is because, his son says, Hajj 'Ali is considered a fine speaker by the Bedouins of al-Qasr.

121 177 178 We can see how these details carry larger implications within the context of political and social structures undergoing change. It is the stuff which the anthropologist finds important for an understanding of the process of change.

156 159 554 177 178 If I have established thus far that Hajj 'Ali is politically active and representative in both the traditional and the modern systems, then the attempt is now to prove that he consciously seeks to change the traditional in the direction of the modern for political and moral reasons, and for social and personal reasons.

156 159 554 177 178 124 829 571 Hajj 'Ali, when he spoke with me, inevitably came around to the subject of international politics, whether this was the question of Israel or the image which America's racial problems presented. Hajj 'Ali was the only man from the whole Marsa Matruh area who was neither shaikh nor 'umda to attend the nomination of Jamal Abd al-Nasser in January of 1965. In all of this, I detect a move on the part of Hajj 'Ali to identify himself with an Egyptian reference group and to

156 tional style of Bedouin hospitality--"as we used to do in
159 Cyrenaica"--and spent a total of 50 L.E. for the welcoming
554 ceremony. "This money was from his own pocket," as the
829 Bedouins of al-Qasr complained after it was learned that
574 the vice-President would not visit Matruh after all. As
648 a matter of fact, all of the Bedouin leaders who had been
invited to the reception by Hajj 'Ali refused to eat the
food, for they said that it had not been prepared for them.
[576] This act was taken as a show of respect for Hajj 'Ali and
anger with bureaucrats.

156 Hajj 'Ali is the representative of al-Qasr to the
159 Arab Socialist Union which meets in Marsa Matruh and has
554 cell meetings in al-Qasr. The socialist cell in al-Qasr
648 meets about three times a month. When I asked why Hajj 'Ali
668 was the man chosen to represent all of al-Qasr at section
[124] meetings of the Union, the reply was: "Because he is a member
• [635] of the Majlis al-Muhafza." There was one section meeting
of the Union in Matruh while I was in the field. The theme
of the meeting was "The Meaning of Socialism." Hajj 'Ali
attended this meeting.

156 In sum, it seems not too far afield to say that Hajj
159 'Ali is prepared to take over the leadership of the Bedouins
554 in a much more sophisticated manner than one could possibly
expect from the traditional style of politics. Hajj 'Ali's
[634] comments about the 'umda and the 'umda's probable successor

634 666 659 554 619 635 The situation is quite different in the Western Desert. Although it is the government, represented by the province council, which makes the final decision in appointing the omda or sheikh, yet this appointment is made on the basis of nominations given by the gribal segment or segments which he would represent. Since the tribal segment usually nominates one person, the decision of the council is limited to the examination of the credentials of the nominee and to see if he meets the basic requirements of the law. If a certain nominee is rejected by the council, a very rare occurrence, the matter goes back to the tribal segment to make another nomination. In practice, then, the omda of the Western Desert is elected by the people and the appointment by the government of the omda is significant only in cases where the omda is to represent more than one small tribal segment and each nominates one. Here the council has to choose between the various nominaees and appoints the best qualified. Unlike the omda of the village, the tribal omda is a real representative of his people. Despite the fact that he becomes part of a governmental structure, his basic function is to look after the interest of his tribal group. Or, as one informant put it, "The omda is the servant of the people." In many cases the best interest of the tribal segment is served through full cooperation of the omda with the government. So far there seems to be very little conflict between the interest of the tribal populations and that of the government. There is very little in the area that the government demands or needs. There is no taxable land to speak of. There are only a few acres of barley land and even these are minimally taxed. The main responsibility of the omda to the government is to report births and deaths and give a yearly list of young men

634 554 657 619 [622] [651] 634 554 657